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Self-Identity's Role in Determining Unipole Behavior:

Focus on the First and Second Persian Gulf Wars

단극체제 패권국의 행위결정에의 자기정체성의 역할: 두 걸프전의 비교사례연구

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Abstract

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The upheavals in the international order that occurred with the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks in New York City were followed by rapid and radical changes in U.S. foreign policy and the way in which the United States placed itself in the international community. The United States became the sole superpower in a new unipolar structure, without any major countervailing powers that constrained its behavioral choices, which were significantly different during the First and Second Persian Gulf Wars. What made this difference? Arguing that structural explanations for state behavior are insufficient to explain this disparity, this paper considers the variable of constructed self-identity as being the determining factor in changing the United States' approaches to the two wars against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The self-identities are demonstrated through a fantasy theme analysis of the two Bush presidents' rhetoric, then used to explain why the two presidents acted differently in the two wars.

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Keywords: Self-identity, unipolarity, state behavior, crisis rhetoric, Persian Gulf War, Iraq War

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I. Introduction

After the end of the Cold War, the most interesting change that occurred on a global scale for international relations scholars was the change in structure. The Cold War had represented a true bipolar structure as defined by Kenneth Waltz. In this definition, power between nations was not bifurcated into two different camps but between two different major states, which are central actors in international relations theory. This conceptualization of bipolarity meant that the two powers who represented the poles in a bipolar structure had to compete not through external balancing, or alliances with other nations, but through internal balancing, or the utilization of the state's own resources and population (Jervis 2009). Once the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union could not internally balance its own resources in any possible way to rival that of the United States, the world moved into a unipolar structure. While the Cold War was described often as a battle of ideas, from a structural perspective it was a battle between two powerful states. Following this line of thought, the new unipolarity that dawned in the 1990s was not one in which the majority of states were under the United States' control or influence, but one in which the United States simply had an unrivaled ability to utilize its own resources in order to produce power.

The important question that arises from this situation of power concentration is, then, how the unipolar state, the United States, will behave with this power at its disposal. Traditional balance-of-power theory focuses its attention on secondary states and their desire to balance out the power of the great states. This perspective makes two

assumptions: first, that the international environment is marked by anarchy, and second, that states see each other only by their level of power, with little room for the likelihood of forgoing the option of balance for the pursuit of common goals. In the current unipolar system led by the United States, this framework becomes limited in explanatory power because those two assumptions can no longer hold. As Jervis (2009) notes, the new unipolarity takes the international structure out of its fundamental assumption of anarchy and towards a semblance of hierarchy. Second, the dominance of liberal values in the post-Cold War era makes the idea of cooperation between like-minded states more tenable than what would be possible under more familiar systems of multipolarity. Under this system, secondary states cannot necessarily be expected to behave in a way that would lead to balancing. By extension, unipolar states cannot be expected to behave solely in a way that would maximize its security against other nations, as the traditional balance-of-power theory would suggest.

Instead of simply building capabilities to eliminate the possibility of balancing, the United States has pursued a kind of unipolarity in which it can exercise leadership through attracting other states. Jervis (2009) notes that the United States' power is made up of three elements - military power, economic power, and other types of power that can be summed up in the umbrella term "soft power." Although it is difficult to define or measure the extent of the United States' soft power, it is this third element that can be harnessed to produce international dynamics that would best serve its interests, at the lowest costs. Being a unipolar power does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the United States is free of all security threats, but it does place the U.S. in a relative position

that gives it significant freedom to pursue changes in policy to move the world closer to what it perceives as being ideal.

According to Gowan (2003), after the Cold War the U.S. was able to position itself as the hub nation in a hub-and-spokes model of international relations. In this model, major capitalist states would consider their relationships with the U.S. to be more important than any other single relationship (Gowan 2003). The United States is not only a member, but arguably the most powerful member in international organizations that determine the manner in which other nations evolve, such as the United Nations, the North American Treaty Organization (NATO), and the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Bullock 2003). Therefore, the world is acutely sensitive to the decisions made by the United States, both in the present, and in the future. In a realist framework it can be reasonably assumed that any decisions made by the U.S. would be designed to maintain the unipolar status quo and to keep the U.S. at the apex of all international relations. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are different strategies that can be employed to this end. Will the United States attempt to maintain its preponderant power by convincing other states through its behavior that it is not a security threat to any other nation? Or will it take actions that repeatedly display and expand its overwhelming power, effectively using the tool of fear to repress other nations' impulses to balance? What is the factor that determines which choice it will make?

The differences in behavioral patterns coming from different U.S. administrations after the end of the Cold War, despite their being part of the same unipolar world order, indicate that the distribution of capabilities is not the sole

determinant of a state's behavior. This proposition can be supported by U.S. decisions in the unipolar era that do not necessarily agree with what realist theorists would agree to be the best course of action - for example, the pursuit of the war in Iraq in 2003. I argue that after accepting the realist assumption that a unipolar state will behave in a manner that will maintain its position in the international order, a constructivist approach can help to explain why that state would pursue particular strategies to reach that goal. "Self-identity," or the way in which a state perceives itself and its place in the world, decides what kind of unipolarity is determined to be optimal, and will lead to the corresponding behavior.

According to the constructivist theorist Alexander Wendt in *Social Theory of International Politics*, a major determinant in the way international relationships are formed, maintained, and destroyed is the way in which nations view other states' identities - whether they are friends, enemies, or rivals (Wendt 1999). These identities, in turn, determine how states will view each other's interests, and ultimately affect how different nations will proceed in times of peace and war. Previous to any actions of material consequence, communication through words is the primary vehicle through which this identity formation takes place. As Wendt notes, the "cultural formation" of identities through interactions and socialization is much more useful in describing the identity formation processes of today's nation-states than the idea of "natural selection" of identities[1].

With the birth of various global and regional international organizations

[1] Wendt (1999) p. 324

designed to foster debate and cooperation, the deterrent nature of nuclear weapons, and the integration of markets, the anarchy of international relations is less manifest in physical attacks than in decisions about whether or not to cooperate with other states. This in turn means that countries must identify their own interests and those of others before tangible actions take place. While a state is creating an identity that would make it less likely for other states to try and balance them, it becomes socialized itself, developing a self-identity that will determine its behavior.

In this paper, I will support my argument that self-identity determines unipolar state behavior by demonstrating the way in which U.S. self-identity led to different approaches to the first and second Persian Gulf Wars. The central question is as follows: "Why did the U.S. act differently in the First and Second Persian Gulf Wars, despite fighting the same enemy and being part of the same unipolar structure?" The question will be answered with the demonstration of two propositions. First, the U.S. perception of itself and its role in the international sphere was different during the two wars, which affected its foreign policy. The two different self-identities that were present during the first and second Bush administrations will be shown through an analysis of the two presidents' rhetoric. Second, this difference in identity led to different U.S. behavior during the two Persian Gulf Wars.

The paper will proceed in the following order. First, I will offer historical background on the two Persian Gulf Wars to give the formation of U.S. self-identity context. Then, I will present my theoretical framework, which will present the construction of self-identity as a concept that can fill the explanatory gaps in structuralist

explanations of unipole decision-making. To test my hypothesis according to this framework, I will demonstrate that the U.S. had different self-identities during the two wars, and that these identities were the determining factor in how the U.S. would execute the two wars. The two U.S. self-identities will be deduced from a rhetorical analysis of the two Bush presidents, which will follow a brief overview of existing literature on crisis rhetoric and an explanation of the analytical method. The two self-identities will then be matched to the presidents' different actions in their respective wars. I will end with a discussion about implications for future research.

II. Historical Background

The Gulf War Under President George H.W. Bush

On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein of Iraq ordered the invasion of neighboring Kuwait. His claim was that Kuwait had been siphoning crude oil from oil fields along the two nations' shared border. Hussein's act of aggression was met with an immediate international response - Saudi Arabia and Kuwait turned to the U.S. and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for support. President Bush publicly condemned Iraq alongside Britain and the Soviet Union, and the United Nations Security Council quickly passed Resolution 660 "condemn[ing] the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait" and "demand[ing] that Iraq withdraw immediately and unconditionally all its forces to the positions in which they were located on 1 August 1990."[2] Hussein ignored the demands of the United Nations and annexed Kuwait on August 8, 1990 as its 19th province. On this day, the United States, NATO allies, and Egypt and other Arab nations began a military buildup called Operation Desert Shield to prevent an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, Hussein attempted to build his own coalition by declaring a jihad against the West and offering to leave Kuwait if Israel withdrew from its own occupied territories, aligning himself with the Palestinian cause.

When continued condemnations failed to compel Hussein to withdraw troops

[2] "Security Council Resolution 660." *UN News Center*.

from Kuwait, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 678 on November 29, 1990, in which it set a deadline of January 15th, 1991, for Iraqi evacuation of Kuwait. Failing that, the Resolution would authorize Member States "to use all necessary means to uphold and implement resolution 660 (1990) and all subsequent relevant resolutions and to restore international peace and security in the area."[3] On January 8, 1991, Bush issued an ultimatum to Hussein through his speech "Message to the Allied Nations on the Persian Gulf Crisis." He said, "Withdraw from Kuwait, without condition and without delay, or - at any time on or after that date - face a coalition ready and willing to employ 'all means necessary' to enforce the will of the United Nations."[4]

Hussein defied the ultimatum, and on January 17, 1991, a coalition air offensive led by the United States called Operation Desert Storm began. On February 24th, an allied ground offensive called Operation Desert Sabre began, and by February 28th it became clear that the Iraqi defense was crumbling. Bush declared a ceasefire, ending the Gulf War. The end of the war was formalized by United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 on April 3rd, 1991, which imposed various punitive restrictions on Iraq, with a particular focus on restrictions regarding the development and use of weapons.

[3] "Security Council Resolution 678." *UN News Center*.
[4] "George Bush: Message to Allied Nations on the Persian Gulf Crisis." *The American Presidency Project*.

The Iraq War Under President George W. Bush

After the Gulf War, Iraq continued to defy the United Nations' demands to ban its weapons and weapons technology, raising concerns about the possibility of continued aggression by Saddam Hussein. In 2001, after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, these concerns were amplified within the Bush administration. On September 20th, 2001, President George W. Bush gave a speech in which he noted the United States' vulnerabilities in the wake of 9/11 and declared a war on terror and introduced what would become known as the "Bush Doctrine." According to this doctrine, the United States would adopt a policy of preemption against terrorist threats. George W. Bush went on to single out Saddam Hussein as a threat to the U.S. not only because of his continued pursuit of highly dangerous weapons including, allegedly, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) but also because of the country's sympathies for terrorist networks. Implicit in this accusation was the notion that Saddam Hussein's government was harboring Al-Qaeda, the network behind the 9/11 attacks.

The United States, with the support of the British government headed by Prime Minister Tony Blair, argued for a preemptive attack on Iraq, which was opposed vocally by strategic NATO allies such as France and Germany. Opponents of the preemptive strike urged further diplomatic measures to be taken to bring Iraq within international laws before using military force. After much debate, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1441, which authorized the resumption of inspections of prohibited weapons to be carried out. The inspections yielded no evidence that Iraq was indeed in

possession of weapons of mass destruction. However, on March 17th, 2003, Bush issued an ultimatum for Saddam Hussein to leave Iraq within 24 hours before the United States invaded.

The allied attack, Operation Iraqi Freedom, began on March 19th, 2003, followed up by a ground offensive two days later. They faced a large, unorganized Iraqi resistance, but by April 9th they had taken control of Baghdad. On May 1st, 2003, Bush declared an end to major combat operations, and the occupation of Iraq began.

III. Theoretical Framework: Identity's Role in Unipole Behavior

The structural changes that occurred in the international sphere at the turn of the 1990s left theorists scrambling for the right term to describe the condition after the demise of bipolarity. Taking note of the fact that the United States did not necessarily have overwhelming economic prowess to match its military dominance, meaning that its resources could be insufficient to translate its military power into actual military influence, scholars tried out terms such as "empire," "imperium," and "uni-multipolarity"[5] (Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth 2009). However, when the polarity of international structure was defined only in terms of solid material capabilities, it was undisputable that the world had entered a unipolar era led by the United States. Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth loosely defined unipolarity as a state in which one nation's "overall share of capabilities places it unambiguously in a class by itself compared to all other states."[6] Charles Krauthammer (1990) described the United States' exclusive position as a unipolar power in the post-Cold War world by saying that

> *"[The United States] is the only country with the military, diplomatic, political and economic assets to be a decisive player in any conflict in whatever part of the world it chooses to involve itself."*[7]

Assuming that the U.S. is now the dominant unipole in international politics,

[5] Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth (2009), p. 3
[6] Above, p. 5
[7] Krauthammer (1990), p. 5

what implications does that have for the ways in which it will behave in the international sphere? Before the dawn of unipolarity, many scholars had assumed that once any nation found itself at the apex, it would take on a more passive, defensive position, satisfied with the status quo. However, in the post-Cold War era this assumption has been broken. Jervis (2009) writes that the absence of a countervailing power actually increases the United States' propensity to be revisionist rather than satisfied. The unipole's revisionism is different from the revisionism described in power transition theory or hegemonic stability theory, which refers to the attitude of a state that hopes to change the distribution of power by challenging the hegemon. In Jervis's description, the revisionist unipole hopes to change rules, institutions, or other norms of international behavior that would create conditions more advantageous to its foreign policy goals.

Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth (2009) note that one particular facet in which unipolar states acquire a unique position is in the provision of public goods. As the dominant state, a unipole has the ability to shoulder a heavier responsibility when it comes to providing public goods for the world community, but there is no guarantee that it will make that choice. Mastanduno (2009) writes that unipoles will use their influence to provide public goods, but will also maneuver the system to meet its more parochial needs. The provision, or withholding of certain public goods or responsibilities to meet a unipole's needs can affect the definition and implementation of international justice, and revise the international order entirely under unipolarity.

Although these theorists all present the argument that unipolar states will choose to behave in a way that will change the overall international system in its favor, they do

not identify the factor which determines what courses of action a unipole will see as being to its advantage. When does a unipole think it is best to take a defensive position and to minimize the threat perception of other countries, and when does it decide to display its power or to expand its power to intimidate other states?

Following the constructivist line of thought, I posit that a unipole's choices in behavior will be determined by self-identity. The absence of a countervailing power does mean, as other theorists have noted, that the unipole has considerably more leverage and freedom in its statecraft. The unipole's words and decisions carry more weight in the international sphere than do those of other nations. However, while the unipole is attempting to revise, or reconstruct the international order to feed its parochial interests, it becomes socialized itself and experiences changes in self-identity. In other words, persuasion is not necessarily a one-way street; as much as other nations' behaviors are changed by the evolving norms influenced by the unipole, the unipole's behaviors are influenced by a changing self-identity.

David Campbell (1992) discusses the way in which identity formation is linked to a nation's foreign policy. Taking a cue from Richard Ashley (1987), Campbell defines foreign policy as a political performance that requires the statesman to create firm boundaries with regard to a nation's identity (Campbell 1992). In order to achieve this purpose, a double exclusionary practice is required. The first exclusion is within the nation, excluding dissenting ideas from becoming a part of national identity, and the second exclusion is external - defining foreign elements that could hinder or weaken a nation's identity. In Campbell's view, all foreign policy eventually boils down to efforts to

"overcome or neutralize other practices which might instantiate alternative possibilities for identity."[8] In this view, foreign policy realities do not dictate what kind of identity will be formed to pursue the interests of power, as realists claim, but identity delineates which foreign policy decisions are appropriate. The way in which a unipole views itself, and its role in the international community, can lead it to make foreign policy decisions that will ultimately lead to significant changes that will impact international norms and accepted concepts.

The difficulty in this argument is mainly that identity is intangible. It cannot be measured in terms of GDP or military spending, or any other quantitative standard. However, it can be deduced through certain cues given by government leaders. In particular, I argue that self-identity can be deduced especially well through rhetoric in times of crisis or war. This is because, as Campbell writes, identity formation ultimately is dependent upon differences and fear. In other words, the boundaries that are drawn through foreign policy between what a nation wishes to stand for, and against, are predicated upon an innate fear about what is "other" or foreign. Therefore, the "efficacy of one particular practice will more often than not be sharpened by the representation of danger."[9] Here, "practice" refers to foreign policy actions that formulate identity. War rhetoric is a particularly effective way to create boundaries of national identity because there is not only a representation of danger, but a tangible threat to security that heightens the fear invoked by the representation of choice.

[8] Campbell (1992), p. 78.
[9] Campbell (1992), p. 78.

To demonstrate this claim, I will be examining the rhetoric coming from the two Bush administrations during the first and second Persian Gulf Wars to see how self-identity affected the ways in which the two wars were carried out. Despite fighting the same enemy, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, and operating under the same unipolar structure, the two wars were executed in contrasting ways because of the contrasting self-identities that were formed at the time.

IV. Identity Reflected in Rhetoric

Crisis Rhetoric as a Reflection of Identity

Crisis rhetoric is an effective subject for analysis when examining a nation's self-identity because it is essentially a tool of persuasion, which means that the rhetor, or the president in this study, must clearly lay out his priorities and interpretation of the crisis. Jim Kuypers (1997) offers a review of the debate over the characteristics of crisis rhetoric, and the typology that can be used to categorize different instances of crisis rhetoric. He first cites Theodore Windt as the scholar who began serious studies of crisis rhetoric. According to Windt as explained by Kuypers, there are three features of crisis rhetoric that are always present: an obligatory statement of facts, a melodrama between good and evil, and a framing of policies being enacted as being moral acts (Kuypers 1997). From this starting point, other scholars have attempted to create subcategories of crisis rhetoric. Cherwitz and Zagacki (1986) argued that presidential crisis rhetoric can be divided into consummatory rhetoric, which frames the conflict and calls for change or action while urging for caution and patience, and justificatory rhetoric, which is part of an overt military action on the part of the United States and focuses on providing the reasoning behind the use of force (Cherwitz and Zagacki 1986). Bonnie Dow (1989), on the other hand, divided crisis rhetoric into epideictic and deliberative rhetoric. The former urged understanding of a conflict while the latter was tailored to gain policy approval. She saw

epideictic discourse as emerging as a result of crisis events, while deliberative rhetoric either caused crises by constructing them (Dow 1989).

These subcategorizations of crisis rhetoric have been widely criticized on different grounds. The situational factors of each crisis and the president's response to each were limited by circumstantial and political realities, which makes it difficult to place any particular rhetorical example squarely in a subcategory. However, what all of the dissenting scholars do agree on is that whether crises are created through rhetoric or rhetoric is a response to a crisis, the way in which crises are understood can be constructed through presidential rhetoric (Kuypers 1997). This, in turn, means that rhetoric determines how a state views itself in relation to the circumstances at hand.

The power of wartime and crisis rhetoric has been discussed extensively in existing literature. Many scholars including Kuusisto (1998) have agreed that "wars are fought not only with arms, but also with words."[10] In all nations, but particularly in democratic nations, it is essential for the head of state to receive support for his cause from the armed forces and from the public at large. The government, as the most informed body in any conflict situation, must be able to describe the conflict in such a manner that can be understood by the public, and provide a "plot"[11] that will help audiences make sense of current events and how they will play out (Kuusisto 1998, Kuypers 1997). This plot usually entails framing the story as a case of the immoral actions of violence serving moral causes - the second element of Windt's characterization

[10] Kuusisto (1998), p. 603
[11] Ibid.

of crisis rhetoric, which requires the creation of melodrama between good and evil (Kuypers 1997). Coles (2002) remarks that many scholars conclude that the legitimacy of foreign policy, no matter how pragmatic the initial considerations, is essentially a "moral task."[12] Harlow (2006) notes that presidents have considerable leverage in this task by "persuad[ing] us to see how he *wants us to see*"[13] and making use of the "representative anecdote of war" through "good-versus-evil plotlines, appeals to group autonomy and identity (characters), and contemplation of scenic restraints."[14]

In the case of war rhetoric coming from the White House, there has been extensive research on how rhetors have used what Phillip Wander (1984) calls "prophetic dualism,"[15] a rhetorical manifestation of the civil religion of American Exceptionalism. In the prophetic dualist mode, the rhetor defines a crisis in terms of a dichotomy, labeling America as the embodiment of everything moral and sacred while denigrating the enemy to the barbaric and hedonistic (Stuckey 1992, Zagacki 2007). This rhetorical mode effectively eradicates any alternative but to fight for a just cause, and is effective when, as Wander notes, the audience is "well-versed in, and comfortable with, rhetorical models derived from fundamentalist Christianity."[16]

Many scholars have studied American war rhetoric following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and how the United States depicts both itself and its actions for justificatory purposes, focusing mostly on domestic audiences. Coles (2002) discussed

[12] Coles (2002), p. 404.
[13] Harlow (2006), p. 59.
[14] Ibid. p. 58.
[15] Wander (1984), p. 341
[16] Stuckey (1992), p. 249.

how the origin myth and civil religion of Manifest Destiny was utilized by Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton in rhetoric about the Gulf War and the conflict in Kosovo. She identified two modes of Manifest Destiny that would present the role of the U.S. in two different ways - the "priestly mode" that focuses on the superiority of the U.S. and calls for a pivotal role, and the "prophetic mode" in which American Exceptionalism is qualified with the need for reform, as well as the need to share both the privileges and responsibilities of international military action with other countries.

Drawing on the work of Robert Ivie, Cole (1996) discussed how George H.W. Bush attempted to use the metaphor of war in order to make use of the civil religion of American Exceptionalism, but ultimately failed because he failed to overcome the specter of the "Vietnam Syndrome" or to sufficiently address the gap between a grand international strategy and a faltering economy at home. Kuusisto (1998) also explored the use of metaphor by analyzing the public speeches of major foreign policy figures in the U.S., U.K., and France with regard to the military conflicts in Iraq and in Bosnia. She determined that the use of particular metaphors contributed to the framing of the two conflicts in certain ways. The storybook, sports, and business metaphors framed the Gulf War as being a conflict that was like a game, with clear winners and losers, while the natural catastrophe and nightmare metaphors were used to depict the events in Bosnia as being despairing and saddening, but ultimately out of one's control and power.

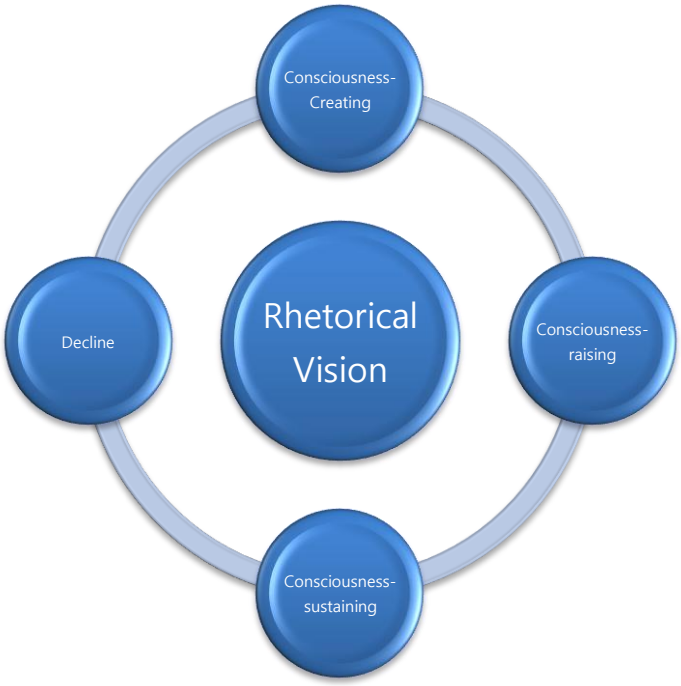
This past literature has focused mostly on how rhetorical strategies were used in order to persuade domestic and international audiences. However, in this paper the focus is to see how rhetoric reflected the United States' self-identity during the Persian Gulf

Wars. In accordance with constructivist theory, I argue that in the process of determining how to convince domestic and international audiences to support these wars, the United States developed a self-identity which was reflected in its ultimate rhetoric. This requires a different type of analysis that focuses on the major themes set forth in the texts, and I chose fantasy theme analysis as my tool. Fantasy theme analysis is based on the conceptions of symbolic convergence theory, which I discuss below.

Symbolic Convergence Theory

Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT), first put forth by Ernest Bormann (1982), is a theory of group communication that describes how the members of a group or community come to share a convergent view of reality and the events that happen around them. According to this theory, stories called fantasy themes are created and shared among people, spreading their influence by a chaining-out process. The chaining fantasy themes all contribute to the convergence of group members' realities into rhetorical visions, which are larger plots that guide the interpretation of current events. When events change and these rhetorical visions and fantasy themes are no longer sufficient to explain new developments, they implode and create spaces for new fantasies to emerge (Bormann 1982, Bormann, Cragan, and Shields 1984). Here, I argue that the two Bush presidents' rhetorical visions were reflections of self-identity at the time of the two wars.

Figure 1 The life cycle of a rhetorical vision (SCT)



Although the original Symbolic Convergence Theory was based on interactions among small groups of people, Bormann and his colleagues (1978) showed that a similar kind of fantasy creating and chaining-out effect could be observed among the larger public by conducting a fantasy theme analysis of the political persuasion in the 1976 American presidential elections via political cartoons. In his paper, he states that "mass communication events [create] shared fantasies in larger publics by means of the same dynamic psychological processes which create shared fantasies in small face-to-face groups."[17] Wells (1996) also showed that the fantasy theme analysis model was applicable to the American political sphere by conducting an analysis of Nixon's

[17] Bormann, Koester, and Bennett (1978), p. 319

"Checkers" speech, and concluding that the dominant fantasy themes he identified throughout the speech were constructed with the purpose of designing a rhetorical vision in which the audience would be led to believe that Nixon "represent[ed] an individual of high moral character, patriot, and American ideal." In addition, Bormann and his colleagues (1996) also conducted a fantasy theme analysis on the rhetorical vision of the Cold War, dissecting the various themes that were propagated through rhetoric and the media and analyzing how they came together to form the American public's perception of reality in international relations during the Cold War.

In the past, Symbolic Convergence Theory had been subject to a number of criticisms. Olufowote (2006) identifies three criticisms in particular - "(a) explanations for why humans dramatize and share fantasy, (b) a convergence ideology, and (c) characterization of membership in rhetorical communities" (459). Despite these shortcomings, I believe that SCT is appropriate for analyzing presidential rhetoric as it relates to the construction of identity and foreign relations realities. When attempting to understand the ways in which American presidents shape their foreign policy rhetoric to produce certain fantasies, the reason behind the dramatizing behavior is immediately apparent. The American public as a whole has very little information about the facts of any foreign policy issue, and extensive communications research has shown that in order to make political value judgments, the public turns to heuristic cues from the people they consider to be informed about foreign policy. For a president, the best way to approach foreign policy rhetoric directed at audiences who are relatively ignorant about the facts of any crisis is to put the issue into an easily recognizable, dramatized framework. As

Kuusisto (1998) notes, foreign policy rhetoric "turn originally ambiguous circumstances into something relevant...in the discourses treating far-away events and actors, necessary duties and...obstacles to action are formed out of formerly insignificant elements."[18] This will not only foster quick understanding about the administration's perspective on the issue, but make it easier for citizens who have been exposed to this rhetoric to share it with others around them, or "chain out" the fantasy visions, to borrow from the language of Symbolic Convergence Theory. Bales (1970) suggested that individuals who shared certain psychodynamic concerns or felt a need to converge on a reality to relieve social tensions were likely to be more motivated to share dramas. This is a characterization of a society facing a military conflict, or a group of nations that must reach a conclusion as to the justifiability of military action by one particular country. When boiling down any given conflict to a single plotline, the government is forced to identify its interests and role in the situation, leading to a construction of self-identity.

The second major criticism identified by Olufowote is Social Convergence Theory's pro-socially biased convergence ideology, which implies that individuals are not only prone to share their ideologies but also equally benefit from this type of sharing and converge into one homogeneous reality. In times of war, rhetoric is not only designed to shape opinion for or against a particular action, but also to lead a community to agree to action. When the citizens of the world are faced with a crisis situation that they know will eventually lead to action one way or another, they are motivated to make sense of the events of the present and to know that the actions being taken are rational and justified.

[18] Kuusisto (1998), p. 607

Kuusisto (1998) notes how Alker (1987) remarked that people are driven to "formulate accounts of the life of their society in a specific heroic fairytale manner."[19] Although opinions among Americans, and among countries in the United Nations, about America's engagements in the Gulf and in Iraq may have been divided, in the end it became necessary to converge into one view of the world in order to proceed effectively with war.

The third criticism noted by Olufowote was the characterization of membership in rhetorical communities, which charges that Symbolic Convergence Theory focuses only on those members who are in the most agreement with a rhetorical vision. At least in the study of crisis rhetoric, it can be reasonably argued that the sacrifice of heterogeneity of identities for homogeneity is of less significance. The aim of rhetoric is not to completely change the identities of people and nations, but only that portion of those identities which pertains to the decision-making process of wartime foreign policy. Communications scholars have shown that in the United States, in the lead-up to the war there is an observable "rally-round-the-flag" effect in which presidential approval ratings temporarily rise sharply, even among those who may not have supported his other policies. I argue that when rhetoric is used effectively and the justifications for war are communicated well, other nations will also exhibit this kind of "rally-round-the-flag" effect where they come together in support of a leader they see as best serving their interests and security.[20]

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[19] Kuusisto (1998), p. 605

[20] For more on the "rally-round-the-flag" effect, see John Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson," *The American Political Science Review* (1970): 18-34; Baker and Oneal, "Patriotism or opinion leadership? The nature and origins of the "rally 'round the flag" effect," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45.5 (2001): 661-687; Baum, "The Constitutent Foundations of the

For the reasons stated above, I contend that Symbolic Convergence Theory, despite its criticisms, is a useful framework for analyzing how U.S. Presidents George Herbert Walker Bush and George Walker Bush used their rhetoric to introduce themes and create an identity that would shape the vision of future American foreign policy. Other previous studies on American presidential rhetoric in times of war have utilized other frameworks that deconstructed the rhetorical situation according to rhetor, exigence, and audience, or used Critical Discourse Analysis methodology that counted the number of certain words or phrases used in major speeches. With this previous literature as a foundation, I hope to put together an argument that displays the existence of thematic elements that show how each president wanted to shape his foreign policy future according to the U.S.' self-identity. Through this process, I hope to demonstrate that war rhetoric can be used not only to justify the decision to go to war itself, but that it can be used to peek into how a nation sees itself and its place in the world, which will explain why certain foreign policies deviate from what would be considered optimal under rational-choice frameworks.

In particular, I will be expanding upon Bormann et al. (1996), where the researchers conducted a case study of the rhetorical vision of the Cold War using fantasy theme analysis. I will be arguing that after the Cold war rhetorical vision imploded with the demise of the Soviet Union, a rhetorical vacuum was created in which President George H.W. Bush was able to bring in the rhetorical vision of a new world order of international cooperation through his speeches regarding the Gulf War in 1990. When this

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Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon," *International Studies Quarterly* 46.2 (2002): 263-298.

rhetorical vision imploded with the September 11 attacks on the Twin Towers, George W. Bush's rhetorical vision of preemptive American security and Realpolitik leadership was able to emerge through his speeches regarding the Iraq War in 2003. Although Symbolic Convergence Theory is a framework that includes an explanation of the life cycle of a rhetorical vision, from its inception to its demise, I will be focusing on the creation stage and analyzing how the rhetoric of the two Bush presidents reflected their view of American self-identity.

Rhetorical Analysis: George H.W. Bush[21]

The demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War caused major upheavals throughout the international system. The now-familiar bipolar order and the consequent logic of security that had presented to each nation a clear enemy - whichever sphere that nation happened to belong to - was no longer sufficient to explain the challenges that were up ahead. It was a time of uncertainty and doubts about the role that the United States would play in this new order, and thus it was essentially the perfect storm for the creation of a new rhetorical vision that would define this new reality.

The new post-Cold War rhetorical vision that was presented by President Bush was one of a "New World Order" with three major themes. According to this vision,

1) The world was starting anew;

2) The world was standing together; and

3) The world was more lawful.

While there was no doubt that the world will continue to see conflict, suffering, and casualties, this rhetorical vision publicized by the Persian Gulf War sought to shape a reality in which those conflicts were instigated by an evil minority that could be quashed by the concerted efforts of like-minded righteous nations. In this rhetorical vision the United States would be a leader, but one that would facilitate the actions of the global community, not one that would impose its morality on other nations.

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[21] Nearly all of the quotations from President George H.W. Bush in this section come from his "Address to the United Nations General Assembly by President George H.W. Bush" on October 1, 1990. Only those quotations not from this address will be marked with their respective references.

Timothy Cole noted, the "Gulf War was established as a crucial illustration of the future of the post-Cold War system," (96) and "America's responsibility was tested by the fires of the Gulf War." (99) As the first major military conflict engaging U.S. forces after the Cold War, the Persian Gulf War presented itself as a rhetorical opportunity for the Bush administration to define the focus of future conflicts and the manner in which they would, and should, be executed. Mary Stuckey (1992) also recognized the rhetorical opportunity offered up by the Gulf War crisis. She identified the ways in which the New World Order of President Bush channeled memories of the New World Order set forward by former American president Franklin D. Roosevelt in World War II by making use of "explicit symbolic references and parallels" (251). The recurring themes that appeared in George H.W. Bush's rhetoric came together to formulate the vision of a new world order.

1) Starting anew

"This is a new and different world." In his address to the United Nations on October 1st, 1990, George H.W. Bush emphatically made the case for a new era that would "formally bur[y]" the Cold War. The entire speech was a call for change towards peace, and a presentation of Bush's vision for the future. In other speeches as well, Bush continuously brought back the audience's attention to the importance of passing the test of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict to open a new chapter in the saga of the world. In his "Message to Allied Nations on the Persian Gulf Crisis" Bush called upon the countries in the coalition to recognize that they "stand now at a critical moment, one that will shape the world we live in for years, even decades, to come." Bush also made the case that the

world had already begun on the right path, noting that "The United Nations Security Council's resolute response to Iraq's unprovoked aggression has been without precedent." This kind of unwavering support for the actions that had been taken thus far precluded any arguments for returning to where the world had been just a year ago.

Two metaphors that were notable in their contributions to strengthening the theme of "standing anew" were the metaphors of nature/machinery and construction. Nature and machinery were used as two orientational points that served to represent what was good and bad, future and past in the Gulf conflict. First, the past world order, defined by the Cold War, was described as being "sundered by barbed threats and barbed wire." Today, the world's task was to "tear down old walls," and to acknowledge that "the human spirit cannot be locked up forever." The "machinery" of the United Nations, up to date, had been "frozen" by the divisions of the Cold War. The previous decades were symbolized by machinery and obstacles to freedom, such as walls and locks, which would later be linked to the current actions of Saddam Hussein. The attack on Kuwait brought upon "the stench of diesel and the roar of steel" and the "sound of distant thunder" of the "guns of August" to the "vast, still beauty of the Kuwaiti desert" and its "cloudless sky." Bush wraps up by stating that in future generations, the time of the Gulf War would become known as "a time when humankind came into its own, when we emerged from the grit and the smoke of the industrial age to bring about a revolution of the spirit and the mind."

The nature metaphor was also used to depict the passage of time, and the beginning of a new day. Bush celebrated that the "long twilight struggle that for 45 years

has divided...has come to an end." He continuously uses the symbols of light and darkness to represent the future and the past, which in turn each symbolize what is good, and what must be left behind. He describes Iraq as a nation "isolated and out of step with the times, separated from the civilized world not by space but by centuries," and its aggression as being "a throwback to another era, a dark relic from a dark time." While describing the end of the Cold War as being a "joyous dawn,"[22] he describes the invasion into Kuwait as being "a dark evil"[23] descending. When he spoke to the American Armed Forces stationed in the Persian Gulf Region, he spoke about a "promise of spring...the promise of regrowth and renewal"[24] for peace in the Middle East. The use of words like "dawn" and "spring" all indicated that Bush considered victory in the Gulf to be a turning point to a better tomorrow, a time when darkness would be left in the past for warmth and light.

The construction metaphor planted the image in the audience's mind that there was a clean slate on which a new international order could be built. In his U.N. speech Bush drew a parallel with the new order brought about by the birth of the United Nations by utilizing the same language. Referring to the end of WWII, he said about the delegates who formed the United Nations, "Intensely idealist and yet tempered by war, they sought to build a new kind of bridge between nations, a bridge that might help carry humankind from its darkest hour to its brightest day." Then, speaking about the end of the Cold War, he said, "We are hopeful that...at last - long last - we can build new bridges..." At home, in

[22] Bush, George H.W. "Open Letter to College Students on the Persian Gulf Crisis."
[23] Ibid.
[24] Bush, George H.W. "Radio Address to United States Armed Forces Stationed in the Persian Gulf Region."

his "Address to the Nation Announcing Allied Military Action in the Persian Gulf," he told his fellow Americans that "we have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order." He also expressed hope that in the Gulf, the states there might "build new arrangements for stability," indicating that this new world would bring opportunities for the creation of structures that had been seen as being impossible.

The construction metaphor was utilized repeatedly to cast the United States and other cooperating countries in the role of builders, forgers, and pioneers who would create the mechanisms and structures that would ensure the world become a better place for them. Roberta Coles (2002) described how the idea of Manifest Destiny, which calls upon the righteous to expand their moral territory, was utilized in combination with the civil religion of American Exceptionalism to convince the domestic American audience to see the Gulf War as being justified. In his international speeches, Bush still made use of the concept of Manifest Destiny; this type of expansion mindset can be seen in his UN speech when he says, "I see a world where democracy continues to win new friends and convert old foes." However, he tailored the ideas for an international audience by removing notions of American Exceptionalism, invoking instead the virtue of nations united.

2) Standing Together

The most distinct characteristic that symbolized the Cold War was division, and in order to escape from that Cold War mindset it was imperative for President Bush to

emphasize the importance of unity (Harlow 2006). In almost all of Bush's rhetoric to international audiences, there are repeated mentions about the ways in which all nations were coming together despite their differences in culture and language in the pursuit of peace. The Gulf War was framed not as a war between the United States and Iraq, but as a war between the community of nations that wished to evolve, develop, and progress, against Iraq's Saddam Hussein, who insisted on keeping his own citizens, and the people of Kuwait, captive under a backwards tyranny. He emphatically claimed that "The Gulf crisis proves how important it is to act together, and to act now," and that "no nation can stand against a world united."[25]

In this theme, it is particularly interesting to take note of how Bush's international rhetoric establishes a place for the United States vis-a-vis other nations of the world. Rather than emphasizing the United States' moral superiority or the overwhelming power of the American military or economy, Bush positioned the United States to be a powerful nation that used its power only with the support of other nations. The choice of verbs put the United States in a reinforcing position rather than a leadership position: "The United States supports the use of sanctions...We also support the provision of...humanitarian purposes," "The United States is committed to playing its part...supporting the United Nations and...paying what we are obliged to pay by our commitment to the Charter." The military actions undertaken by the United States were also described as being decided at the suggestion, and with the approval of other nations -

[25] Bush, George H.W. "Address to the Nation Announcing Allied Military Action in the Persian Gulf."

military forces were described as having been dispatched "along with others" and "at the request of the Saudi Government." President Bush also frequently made reference to the diversity of the coalition against Iraq - "forces from 27 nations - rich and poor, Arab and Muslim, European, Asian, African, and American - stand side by side in the Gulf, determined that Saddam's aggression will not stand."

The theme of being united was also furthered by a natural metaphor. The end of the Cold war was described as being a revolution that "swept the world almost with a life of its own, carried by a new breeze of freedom" to touch "almost every corner of the globe." The metaphor of a breeze, invisible and impossible to lock out, yet powerful enough to sweep away dust and rustle the leaves, was an apt analogy for the desire for a peaceful, more cooperative world that Bush saw in the coming years. He also compared the nations of the world to creatures that tend to move together in groups with a common purpose, like fish and ants: "We stand together, prepared to swim upstream, to march uphill, to tackle the tough challenges as they come not only as the United Nations but as the nations of the world united."

3) More Lawful

When Bush spoke of the world being united, he pointed to the mechanisms of international law and international organizations as the uniting forces. In particular, he stressed that the world was moving towards a more fair, and legal manner of working together, which provided a stark contrast to Saddam Hussein's history of brutality, framed as "crimes of abuse and destruction," and contempt of United Nations resolutions. He was

able to frame Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as not only being an act of aggression against another sovereign state but as an attack on the efforts of the world to act according to agreed norms (Harlow 2006). According to Bush, Hussein hoped to "turn the dream of a new international order into a grim nightmare of anarchy in which the law of the jungle supplants the law of nations." Bush also made repeated references to the past United Nations resolutions, with particular emphasis on the level of agreement among the countries involved and the sheer number of resolutions themselves: "Iraq's outlaw act has met a chorus of condemnation in 12 resolutions with the overwhelming support of the Security Council."[26]

In all of his rhetoric, Bush made the dichotomy of legality and illegality clearer by using legal terminology that would make it impossible to deny that the United States and the United Nations had given Hussein his share of due process before going ahead with military action. He described the United Nations as a "parliament of peace" that had provided Iraq with a fair judging by a "jury of its peers." In his ultimatum to Saddam Hussein, Bush indicated that the message was not a show of weakness, but served the "purpose of declaring this deadline was to give Saddam fair warning." If Hussein chose to defy the United Nations despite all of the fair chances given to him, he would be asking for "another day of international outlaws, instead of international law,"[27] and "a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations."[28]

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[26] Bush, George H.W. "Message to Allied Nations on the Persian Gulf Crisis."
[27] Bush, George H.W. "Open Letter to College Students on the Persian Gulf Crisis."
[28] Bush, George H.W. "Address to the Nation Announcing Allied Military Action in the Persian Gulf."

4) Conclusion

For President George H.W. Bush, the Persian Gulf War was a rhetorical opportunity that allowed him to present the international order as he saw it after the end of the Cold War. After decades of framing American security and the security of the world around an ideological conflict that split the world into two hemispheres and struck fear of nuclear disasters into the hearts of national leaders, this was a chance to return to a fight between universal ideas of good and evil. Iraq's invasion into Kuwait was not only a violation of international law but a test to see if the world could be cobbled together again as one community. In President Bush's rhetorical vision, he saw

> *"a new partnership of nations that transcends the Cold War: a partnership based on consultation, cooperation, and collective action, especially through international and regional organizations; a partnership united by principle and the rule of law and supported by an equitable sharing of both cost and commitment; a partnership whose goals are to increase democracy, increase prosperity, increase the peace, and reduce arms."*

By burying the past together with the remains of the Berlin Wall, and coordinating a concerted effort by the United Nations to defend a country that had been violated, Bush's rhetorical vision framed the United States not as an uncontrollable superpower but as an anchor that would lend weight and power to countries that were willing to follow international norms. This rhetorical vision was focused on convincing the world that the United States was eager to begin " a journey into a new day, a new age, and a new partnership to come," where the might of a national military did not necessarily represent a threat to the rest of the world. As Bush remarked, "the calendar offer[ed] up a

convenient milestone, a signpost...the year 2000 marks a turning point," a turning point where the world could " join together in a new compact...to bring the United Nations into the 21st century."

Rhetorical Analysis: George W. Bush[29]

The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City was a moment in United States history that brought two facts to the forefront of the American consciousness. First, even in a world where the United States was an unrivaled superpower, it still lay susceptibility to attack. For all the military conflicts in which the American military plays an important part, the actual territory of the United States had always remained relatively safe from battles. The 9/11 attacks destroyed American property and took American lives in a spectacularly visual display on American soil, which was enough to shock the nation and the world with its demonstration of U.S. vulnerability. Second, America's enemies were no longer confined to other nation-states but non-state networks. The terrorist group al-Qaeda, led by Osama Bin Laden, became a symbol of these non-state actors' capacities for inflicting damages and wreaking havoc on the world's most powerful nation.

These two realizations came together to the conclusion that it was necessary to rethink the nature of American national security, and the ways in which protecting

[29] Nearly all of the quotations from President George H.W. Bush in this section come from his "Address to the United Nations General Assembly by President George W. Bush" on October 3, 2001. Only those quotations not from this address will be marked with their respective references.

national security would change the role that America would play on the international stage. George W. Bush's thoughts on these changes were reflected in the rhetoric he used around the Iraq War of 2003. In the rhetorical vision he presented, the three major fantasy themes were:

1) The end of patience;

2) The U.S. as world leader; and

3) Urgency of action caused by dangerous uncertainties.

The rhetoric that George W. Bush used in his international appeals were more pragmatic and less emotional than his domestic appeals. Whereas his domestic speeches were more focused on tying the case against Saddam Hussein to the attacks on 9/11, hoping that a domestic public still reeling from a surreal attack would be more likely to support military actions, his international case for war against Iraq focused on Hussein's past transgressions. Bush framed his argument around the idea that Hussein's record denied him any further chances to redeem himself, and that the United Nations had also passed its deadline for effective action. The United States was pictured as being the world's moral leader as well as a policeman that was tired of the ineffectiveness of past attempts at peace and would take matters into its own hands. In the world featured in George W. Bush's international rhetorical vision, the two camps of the world weren't divided into those who were peaceful and righteous, and those who were aggressors and terrorists. Rather, the world was divided into those who were willing to do what it took to realize the United States' visions, and those who insisted on ineffective measures and

hopeful thinking.

The end of patience for the countries in the first camp, the United States' camp, had come because of the dangers and uncertainties that the world faced. Bush painted the world as being a dangerous place with hidden schemes and plans for terror and massacres, claiming that it was imperative to act immediately because the risk of letting those hidden plans move into action came at too big a cost. According to this vision, it made no sense to wait for doomsday to come because it was apparent and obvious that day could be prevented.

1) End of patience

"We have been more than patient. We've tried sanctions. We've tried to carrot of oil for food, and stick of coalition military strikes."

"All the decades of deceit and cruelty have now reached an end."[30]

In his speeches regarding his decision on using force to bring down Hussein's regime in Iraq, President George W. Bush made a point of repeatedly stating that the world had waited enough, had tried enough, to preclude any alternatives. When he spoke of the United Nations now facing a "test," it was not an indication that bringing forces into Iraq would be a turning point to pursue new goals. Instead, Bush saw the world as being at the edge of a cliff, and only by taking action to prevent crossing "a terrible line"[31] (The Iraq Threat, 10/7/02) would the international community be able to come back to

[30] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."
[31] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, The Iraq Threat—October 7, 2002."

safer ground.

In order to illustrate how it had become too late to try any further diplomatic measures to dissolve the Iraqi threat, Bush made continuous references to the number of years that had passed since Iraq had first come into focus as a menacing state. The current situation had come "after generations of deceitful dictators and broken treaties and squandered lives," " four years since the last U.N. inspectors set foot in Iraq, four years for the Iraqi regime to plan, and to build, and to test behind the cloak of secrecy," after Iraq had answered " a decade of U.N. demands with a decade of defiance."

It was not only the length of time that had worn down the United States' patience; it was, according to Bush, the record of efforts that the community of nations had pursued to avoid war. "For more than a decade, the United States and other nations have pursued patient and honorable efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime without war,"[32] by engaging in "12 years of diplomacy. We have passed more than a dozen resolutions in the United Nations Security Council. We have sent hundreds of weapons inspectors to oversee the disarmament of Iraq."[33] Despite all of these remarkable efforts, Hussein had defiantly held onto his plans to develop weapons that could endanger the world, essentially challenging the world to take more drastic measures against him.

George W. Bush's rhetoric regarding Iraq also utilized a legal metaphor to more clearly delineate the border between what was objectively right, and wrong. In his address to the United Nations, George W. Bush claimed that "Saddam Hussein has made the case

[32] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."
[33] Ibid.

against himself." He dedicated a significant portion of his speech to listing, mostly in chronological order from 1991 to 1999, the ways in which Saddam Hussein had defied the demands of the United Nations or gone back on his word. By utilizing parallel constructions for his sentences, "[Iraq] broke its promise," "It broke this promise," "Iraq has broken every aspect of this fundamental pledge," Bush was able to build momentum in his speech and create a feeling in the audience that he was building a legal case much in the way that an attorney would present evidence in a court of law.

2) U.S. as world leader

"By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United Nations, you have the power to make that stand, as well."

A second theme that was repeated throughout George W. Bush's rhetoric to international audiences was that of the U.S. being the leader of the world. While it was indisputable that the U.S. was unrivaled in military and economic power, it was never so apparent as in Bush's rhetoric regarding the Iraq War that the United States did not feel any qualms about designating itself to be the moral leader of the global community as well. Rather than referring to the world as a whole, indicating that the United States and most other nations were all sharing and contributing to similar goals, George W. Bush often referred to the United States separately from the rest of the world, implying that the United States was playing a leadership role while other countries chose to follow suit.

In his United Nations address, President George W. Bush began by noting that "many nations represented here have joined in the fight against global terror, and the

people of the United States are grateful." The War on Terror was proclaimed by the United States alone, and all of the other nations were essentially followers who decided to "join" forces with the United States, not out of their own prerogative but because they were awakened to the dangers of terrorism by the U.S. Similarly, when he was later making the case for military engagement in Iraq, George W. Bush proclaimed, "The United States has no quarrel with the Iraqi people; they've suffered too long in silent captivity. Liberty for the Iraq people is a great moral cause, and a great strategic goal." As Zagacki (2007) notes, in his rhetoric Bush was not only constituting the United States as being uniquely equipped to share the gifts of freedom and liberty with the rest of the world, but the Iraqis as a people who would automatically accept American values of being their liberation from "captivity."

In Bush's rhetorical vision, the U.S.'s stance on all matters, military or otherwise, would be unchallenged by other moral nations. As Bullock (2003) notes, "the President's pointed statements for world audiences...seemed to be more dictation from a self-designated pastoral leader than the attempted persuasion of equals."[34] With regard to Iraq and the Middle East, Bush said, "My nation will continue to encourage all parties to step up to their responsibilities as we seek a just and comprehensive settlement to the conflict," and "the United States, with other countries, will work to advance liberty and peace in that region,"[35] self-designating the U.S. to be the authority on which nations were or were not fulfilling their "responsibilities" to world peace and order, and that other

[34] Bullock (2003) p. 49
[35] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."

countries played a complementary role to the United States' leadership in promoting liberty and peace. Later, when it was finally decided that the United States would invade Iraq without the approval of the United Nations, President Bush declared that "The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours."[36] In his rhetoric, there was never any room for disagreement to the goals that were articulated as being fundamental to the United States' vision of the world.

In his addresses, George W. Bush made it clear that it could not be taken for granted that the United States was simply a member of international organizations. The United States' commitment to international organizations only went so far as the actions and the goals of those organizations were aligned with those of the United States. In the early part of his address to the United Nations, President Bush indicated that "as a symbol of our commitment to human dignity, the United States will return to UNESCO. This organization has been reformed..." He indicated that the return of the United States to UNESCO was not out of the realization that UNESCO's calling was one too important for the U.S. to miss out on, but that the return was contingent on the organization's changes. Later, when addressing the Iraq situation, Bush made it plain that while the United States would support the United Nations when their goals were aligned, he did not consider their destinies to be intertwined:

> *"The United States helped found the United Nations. We want the United Nations to be effective, and respectful, and successful. We want the resolutions of the world's most important multilateral body to be enforced. And right now those resolutions are being unilaterally subverted by the Iraqi regime."*

[36] Ibid.

Bush's choice of saying that he "wanted" the United Nations to be successful and effective did not indicate that the United States would necessarily be willing to make any sacrifices

3) Dangerous uncertainties and the need for immediate action

The world that the United States was leading, in George W. Bush's rhetorical vision, was one of great uncertainty. The U.S. had been recently shocked into a lesson on vulnerability by the attacks on September 11, 2001, and there were many more attacks that were gearing up to take place, but out of sight. According to President Bush, "this threat hides within many nations, including my own. In cells and camps, terrorists are plotting further destruction, and building new bases for their war against civilization." Although there had been no concrete threats of imminent attack, the uncertainty of this level of danger was unacceptable for Bush. Ironically, the level of uncertainty led to a firmer belief in the need to take military action, in his speeches. In his eve-of-war speech, he claimed, "These attacks are not inevitable. They are, however, possible. And this very fact underscores the reason we cannot live under the threat of blackmail."[37] In fact, the very lack of forewarning signaled to the Bush administration that whatever attacks were indeed coming were going to be the work of the most fearsome terrorists. He made the argument that "terrorists and terror states do not reveal these threats with fair notice, in formal declarations - and responding to such enemies only after they have struck first is

[37] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."

not self-defense, it is suicide."[38]

The entire structure of Bush's address to the United Nations was designed to present a trove of evidence from the past that Saddam Hussein was not only a depraved and violent tyrant, but that he had every intention of harming the United States. According to Bush, ""The history, the logic, and the facts lead to one conclusion: Saddam Hussein's regime is a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence." Any individual or nation who did not accept the urgency of the situation was considered to be playing in a "reckless gamble," betting "the lives of millions and the peace of the world." It was a piled deck, where "the risks of inaction would be far greater"[39] than the costs of a preemptive strike. These nations were not necessarily sympathetic or protective of Hussein, but either naïve or weak-willed. Bush called the choice of letting further diplomatic measures run their course to be giving in to "illusions." As for the governments who had opposed the United States' push for military action in Iraq in the United Nations, he noted, "some permanent members of the Security Council have publicly announced they will veto any resolution that compels the disarmament of Iraq. These governments share our assessment of the danger, but not our resolve to meet it."[40]

The urgency of the looming threats, coupled with the unwillingness of some other nations (with the notable exception of the U.K.) to join in the fight, meant that the United States was backed into a corner; the world had left it no choice but to act

[38] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."
[39] Ibid.
[40] Bush, George W. "George W. Bush, Message to Saddam—March 17, 2003."

immediately of its own accord, with or without the cooperation of the international community. This idea of preemption was justified through continued and repeated emphases on the oncoming threat – the United States would not "stand by and do nothing while dangers gather," would act "before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act,"[41] "before [the threat] can appear suddenly in our skies and cities."[42]

4) Conclusion

While George W. Bush never explicitly downplayed the importance of diplomatic efforts or international law in his rhetoric surrounding the Iraq War of 2003, it was clear from his underscoring of the end of patience and the urgency of responding to the possible threat of attack that he believed there was no time for measures he saw as being ineffective. He chose wording that seemed to put practical interests ahead of ideology, but his conspicuous separation of the United States from the rest of the world community, as well as his proclamations of America's superiority in morality and resolve showed that his rhetorical vision was tinted heavily with the ideas of American Exceptionalism and a disregard for institutions. He attempted to shape a reality where Wander's prophetic dualism was expanded to the international sphere, where good and evil were clearly delineated in black and white, with the United States spearheading the camp of the righteous.

[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

V. Connection Between U.S. Self-Identity and Action

The analysis of speeches given by Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush during the Gulf War and the Iraq War, respectively, show the following differences in fantasy themes:

Table 1 Differences in fantasy themes between Bush 41 and Bush 43[43]

George H. W. Bush	George W. Bush
Starting anew	End of patience
Standing together	U.S. as world leader
A more lawful world	Dangerous uncertainties and need for action

Whereas Bush 41 saw the world as ending a chapter of bifurcation and conflict to begin a new era of ideological convergence through cooperative efforts, Bush 43 perceived his decision to engage militarily in Iraq as one made after a long wait. In other words, rather than the beginning of a new era, for Bush 43 the Iraq War would be the final portion of the current era. Bush 41 sought to convince the rest of the world that going forward, the United States would act on the international stage in ways that would not take advantage of its superpower status but rather channel it to achieve common goals. As Harlow (2006) explains, "Bush associated unity with consideration, respect, morality,

[43] To avoid confusion between the two presidents in the analysis, President George H.W. Bush and President George W. Bush will be referred to as "Bush 41" and "Bush 43," respectively.

peace, diplomatic protocol, and the appropriate use of authority by an agent." (61) In contrast, Bush 43's rhetoric showed that he was not interested in trying to veil the fact that the United States now had unrivaled power in the international community and intended to use it to shape the world into a safer place, according to the U.S.'s vision. Bush 43 allowed the grand proclamations about the resolve and the virtuous nature of Americans carry over from his domestic rhetoric into his international rhetoric. By utilizing order-like sentence structures and positioning the U.S. as the leader of a righteous group of nations, presumably against a group of evil nations (later embodied by the "Axis of Evil"), Bush's rhetoric almost bullied the international audience into choosing its side. Finally, while Bush 41 praised the fact that "for the first time, the U.N. Security Council [was] beginning to work as it was designed to work" and emphasized several times that the international community was acting fairly with respect to due process with Iraq, Bush 43 chose to present instead an argument for a looming threat and the need for immediate and "effective," or more severe, action than the diplomatic efforts that had driven the world to the current precarious state.

According to Symbolic Convergence Theory, the purpose of creating rhetorical visions is to shape perceptions of reality. Assuming that both presidents were acting in a way that corresponded to these perceptions, or self-identities, it is necessary to examine the contemporary milieu that the United States was facing at the time of each crisis.

Gulf War

The course of the Cold War and the bifurcation of the world into ideological spheres built up the capitalist world's trust in the legitimacy of American power. Covered by the blanket of American military force, nations accepted that their interests would best be served by aligning themselves with the United States on most issues. They remained supportive as international organizations were directly or indirectly headed up by the United States, increasing its soft power (Bullock 2003).

However, this acceptance of American hegemony changed once the Cold War came to an end. There was no longer any need for a military or cultural superpower to prop up the tenets of capitalism against a common threat, and a unipolar order with the United States at its core was losing legitimacy. Although the buildup of American soft power during the Cold War ensured that the United States would not be viewed as a military threat to other major countries, there was less incentive for major powers to align themselves with U.S. interests on matters that would not directly affect their security (Stearns 1996). In particular, the United States' position as the world's economic leader and hub was weakening as Japan and Germany grew stronger (Coles 2002).

Therefore, from a structural perspective, the world remained solidly unipolar with respect to military capabilities, but from an economic perspective it was moving towards a multipolar order. The breakdown of America's preponderance in areas like the economy and culture would eventually raise more doubt about the wisdom in allowing military unipolarity to continue unchecked and move into a more permanent fixture in the

international landscape. The end of the Cold War shifted focus to problems both old and new - nuclear proliferation, post-Communist transitions, regional and ethnic conflicts, and new agenda issues like the environment (Wiarda 1996).

In this environment, it would have been in the United States' interest to position itself internationally with respect to two ideas. The first was that the United States would not be abusing its power to coerce or bully other states into following its lead, and the second was that the United States would be one of many members of the international community, and not necessarily the leader. The reasons are twofold: first, it was necessary for the United States to convince other states that it had no malicious intent in order to prevent any balancing by other countries. Second, the United States needed to cut back on both political and economic costs that had come with its global reach of interventions. By positioning itself as being only one part of cooperative actions, the United States could establish the groundwork for shared responsibilities.

The self-identity that President George H. W. Bush espoused through his Gulf War rhetoric achieved both of these aims by emphasizing a world that would be united in its efforts, and run according to the rule of international law. In addition, the United States' role in the Gulf War was strategic and limited. The allied intervention did not attempt to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime or to bring democracy to the Middle East, where many of the United States' allies were under non-democratic regimes themselves. These actions were in line with the U.S.'s self-identity of being a nation that would foster international cooperation and ensure the adherence of international law.

Iraq War

The most important factor that affected the way that the U.S. viewed the international order and its place within it at the time of the Iraq War was the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Towers in New York City. This newly recognized vulnerability in the unipolar world's hegemon gave President George W. Bush and his advisors the justification they needed to push ahead with a neoconservative agenda that was embodied in what later came to be known as the Bush Doctrine. Schmidt and Williams (2008) outlines the four major elements of the Bush Doctrine: first, it embraced the notion that the U.S. was an unrivaled superpower, and that American leadership was prerequisite to maintain international peace and order. Second, it outlined a commitment to the use of preemptive use of military force when necessary, discarding more traditional methods of deterrence and containment. Third, it opened up an era of unilateralism on the side of the United States. As Jervis notes, the opposition that rose up against the U.S. decision to invade Iraq actually served the neoconservative agenda because the United States was given an opportunity to show its willingness to use unilateral power (Schmidt and Williams 2008). Lastly, it espoused the goal of democracy promotion as a goal that could drive American foreign policy.

The Bush Doctrine was the image of the United Nations that was created through George W. Bush's international rhetoric - a vision of a world led by a powerful United States that was tired of being patient with ineffective measures and would not be afraid to make unilateral decisions. Unfortunately, this particular vision strengthened the

identity that the U.S. had been creating through its unilateral actions even before Iraq. The U.S. had rejected multilateral efforts such as the Kyoto treaty, the International Criminal Court, and the ban on biological weapons with Russia (Jervis 2003, Schmidt and Williams 2008). Other states could now confirm their fears that the United States was unabashed about its powerful status, and would be willing to use its power despite the possibilities of international opposition.

Jervis's (2003) analysis of the Bush Doctrine cites the unipolar structure and the consequential power that was accorded to the United States as an explanation for the choices of the Bush administration. Whether President Bush made the correct decision in invading Iraq, and the reasons behind his choices, is not within the scope of this paper. My contention is that even if the Bush administration's choice to invade Iraq were politically justifiable from a structural perspective, the wise decision would have been to utilize his address to the United Nations and other rhetorical opportunities as a way to formulate a vision that would induce other nations to interpret the administration's choices as being in the interests of the entire international community. President Bush's claims of his commitment to global democracy and a terror-free world were not presented in a way that implied the accord of the international community and an adherence to international law. Rather, it seemed to coerce the world into accepting the U.S.'s view of the world, instructing rather than persuading. As Bullock (2003) put it,

> *"The rhetoric of persuasion employed by President Bush argued the inherency of a much more feared phenomenon that arguably compelled many nations to resist the American power that would force the prosecution of the war. From their collectivist perspective, language claiming a responsibility incumbent upon the U.S. to protect and spread liberty and freedom smacked*

> *more of the unipolarist philosophy of propagating American democratic values throughout the world as the correct direction of 21st-century history."*[44]

When the contemporary circumstances of the United States and the world were taken into consideration, Bush 43's rhetorical vision was not only a transition away from the rhetorical vision shaped by President George H.W. Bush, but a sharp transition in the wrong direction. The balancing impulses of the rest of the world had been kept in check by a combination of a lack of resources and post-Cold War soft power created by President Bush Sr. and continued through the Clinton administration. From a realist perspective, provoking other nations' discomfort with a unilateral United States was not in the U.S. interest. President Bush Jr. chose this route not because of strategic considerations, but because of the self-identity that the United States had adopted of being the world's policeman.

Furthermore, the idea that the U.S. became so extremely revisionist simply because it could, which is the structural explanation given by Jervis, does not explain why the two Bush presidents made such different decisions in terms of their attitude to multilateralism. Other scholars like Krauthammer (1990) have suggested that in the absence of an external countervailing power, a state's decisions would be swayed mostly by domestic opinion. However, a look at the Gallup polls at the time of the two wars shows that domestic opinion on multilateralism – specifically the United Nations – was not very different.

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[44] Bullock (2003), p. 43.

Table 2. American public opinion on the United Nations' performance

Question: Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?

	Good job	Poor job
1990 (Persian Gulf War)	54	34
2003 (Iraq War)	50	42

Source: Gallup (http://www.gallup.com/poll/116347/united-nations.aspx)

Table 3. American public opinion on U.S. membership in the United Nations

Question: Should the United States give up its membership to the United Nations or not?

	Yes, should	No, should not
1990 (Persian Gulf War)	8	88
2003 (Iraq War)	15	29

Source: Gallup (http://www.gallup.com/poll/116347/united-nations.aspx)

There is a perceivable negative trend in American public opinion towards the United Nations at the time of the 2003 Iraq War, but it is not nearly large enough to warrant the United States' sharp turn towards unilateralism. The more plausible explanation is that the United States chose to act unilaterally in Iraq because of its

changed perception of its own role in the world, which was stated clearly through the Bush Doctrine and mirrored by President Bush's rhetoric.

VI. Conclusion

There is little debate that when the thresholds of polarity are measured by capabilities alone, the United States has become a unipolar power in today's world. There is no country in the world that even comes close to rivalling the United States' expenditures, sophistication, or expertise in military and defense. Despite the rise of other national economies, the United States still holds overwhelming influence over the global economy because of its strategic positions in financial organizations and its interdependence with other national economies. In addition, the United States arguably has the largest amount of soft power of any country in the world. Most members of the United Nations will now at least pay lip service to the values of freedom and democracy, which are now almost automatically associated with the United States. Disapproval for individual American policy decisions notwithstanding, repulsion to the culture or ideology of the United States is uncommon save in concentrated pockets of the world.

Although a unipolar structure does not give the United States free reign to act however it likes in the international sphere, it does give the U.S. wider latitude in deciding what situations or areas of the world it chooses to involve itself in, and the manner in which those decisions are implemented or justified (Krauthammer 1990). Without external powers that create constraints on U.S. behavior, what factors come together to determine how the U.S. will involve itself with other nations, and the manner in which it will use its influence? This paper finds the determining factor to be self-identity, or the way in which the United States views itself and its place and rightful role

in the world. This self-identity is not something that is decided upon solely by the president, but an identity that is socially constructed through endless interactions. While it exerts influence on other nations, it is socialized itself by the reactions of those other nations as well, molding a view of the world and its own identity.

Identity is a difficult factor to name as a predictive variable because of its intangible nature. It cannot be measured quantitatively like military expenditures or GDP, and it is also much more fluid and flexible than more stable characteristics like ideology or religion. The way in which the United States perceives itself can change with new leadership, changing international circumstances (even if they do not significantly impact the distribution of capabilities), or change in other nations' leadership.

However, snapshots of the United States' self-identity can be seen through thematic analyses of the rhetoric coming from the White House, the most representative body of the U.S. As the most visual figure of the United States government, the president serves as a presenter of American policy and the way in which Americans see themselves as a nation, both independently and as a member of the international community. Crafted speeches such as those given by the president may be the best heuristic cues that allow those outside of the decision-making government network to predict, or at best speculate, on the nation's future actions and mindset.

This paper focused on the United States' approaches to the First and Second Persian Gulf Wars because of the two wars' similarities. In both wars, the international structure was unipolar, and the United States was fighting against the same enemy – Saddam Hussein. However, the United States had very different strategic goals in the two

wars. While President George H.W. Bush fought a limited war that ended when Saddam Hussein withdrew from Iraq and agreed to weapons inspections, the goal of George W. Bush was not only to oust the regime of Saddam Hussein but also to create a new democratic regime in the country of Iraq.

This unlimited type of war goals made it clear that George W. Bush's war was not one that was motivated by declining American power. Structuralists such as Kenneth Waltz predicted that when a unipolar nation's power began to wane, it would display a show of force or wage a war even in the absence of a clear threat in order to deter other nations from taking the opportunity to balance (Jervis 2009). However, a long, drawn-out war like the Iraq War, especially with its corresponding financial burdens, is unlikely to be the outcome of this type of reasoning. In fact, this type of targeted strike that was led by the former Bush's administration would fit this description more neatly.

Jervis's (2003) structural explanation for the Bush Doctrine, which focused mainly on the contention that the U.S. was able to pursue wider goals of democracy promotion because a nation's scope of interests grows with its level of power, is also contestable. By the time that George W. Bush took office, there were many who questioned the continuing unipolar power of the U.S. That doubt was nonexistent at the time of the Bush Sr. administration. If unilateral tendencies are sparked by high levels of power and influence, it seems more likely that the 2003-style war would have been carried out earlier in the unipolar era, rather than later.

In this paper, I sought to fill the gaps in the structuralist interpretation of unipolarity by inserting the constructed concept of self-identity. My claim is that a

unipolar structure does not necessarily invite unilateral tendencies, but that it does provide more room for influence by identities because unipoles can concern themselves much less with structural constraints. With more leverage and freedom in foreign policy, the direction of a unipole's decisions, especially with regard to security, will be decided less by concerns about survival and security and more about how the unipole wishes to shape the international environment and its own place in the world.

VII. References

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국문초록

단극체제 패권국의 행위결정에의 자기정체성의 역할: 두 걸프전의 비교사례연구

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냉전의 종식 그리고 9/11 테러와 함께 찾아온 국제질서에의 격변은 미국의 대외정책과 함께 미국이 국제무대에서 스스로의 위치를 조정하는 방식에 빠르고 급격한 변화를 가지고 왔다. 미국은 미국의 국가행위 결정에 제약을 줄 수 있는 주요 대항 세력이 없는 새로운 단극체제에서 유일한 패권국으로 부상하였고, 이는 1차와 2차 걸프전쟁과는 확연히 다른 양상이라고 할 수 있다. 그렇다면, 그 차이는 과연 무엇 때문일까? 이를 국가 행위에 대한 단순히 구조적 설명으로 단정짓기에는 충분하지 않을 것이다. 이에 본 논문은 자기정체성 구축이라는 변수를 미국의 이라크 사담 후세인에 대항하는 두 전쟁에의 접근 방식의 변화 결정 요소로 고려해 보고자 한다. 본 자기정체성의 변수는 논문 내 사안연구인 아버지 전 부시 대통령과 아들 전 부시 대통령의 수사법을 환상주제분석(Fantasy Theme Analysis)의 적용을 통해 보여지며, 바로 이 변수는 두 대통령이 각기 다른 두 전쟁에서 다르게 행동하게 되었던 이유를 설명하는데 사용될 것이다.

주요어: 자기정체성, 단극체제, 국가행위, 위기수사법, 걸프 전쟁, 이라크 전쟁

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